

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 049660
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FOLLOWING REPEAT BONN 3798 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO NAIROBI
77

QUOTE BONN 03798

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CASC, GW, UG, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR ELLERKMANN ON AMIN'S POSSIBLE
MOTIVES

FOLLOWING REPORT FROM AMBASSADOR ELLERKMANN
(FRG NUMBER 96 RECEIVED FROM FONOFF AT 1745Z MARCH 2.

BEGIN TEXT:

"RE: POSSIBLE MOTIVES FOR AMIN'S SHOWDOWN
WITH AMERICANS AND FINAL CANCELLATION OF MEETING

1. PRESIDENT AMIN WAS HURT BADLY BY REMARKS
OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG AND PRESIDENT CARTER ABOUT
KILLINGS IN UGANDA. EVER SINCE ELECTION DAY
NOVEMBER 3 LAST YEAR, HE MADE ALL KINDS OF FRIENDLY
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AND POSITIVE COMMENTS ON NEW ADMINISTRATION AND EVEN
SENT CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT-ELECT.
THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS HE COMMUNICATED THAT HE WISHED
VERY MUCH THAT U.S. EMBASSY IN KAMPALA IS RE-OPENED.
THE FIRST AND ONLY REPLY HE RECEIVED WAS CRITICISM
ON KILLINGS IN HIS COUNTRY. HE TOOK REVENGE WITH THOSE
HE COULD PUT HIS HAND ON: AMERICANS LIVING IN UGANDA.

2. SITUATION WAS IMMEDIATELY EXPLOITED BY PLO, WHICH HAS NOT FORGOTTEN WHAT HAD HAPPENED AT ENTEBBE AIRPORT LAST YEAR AND IS OUT FOR REVENGE. THIS IS DOCUMENTED IN MESSAGE FROM AMIN TO PRESIDENT CARTER.

3. AMIN REALLY SEEMED TO HAVE FEARED THAT AMERICANS MIGHT INVADE UGANDA. HIS REQUEST TO LIBYANS AND CUBANS TO ASSIST HIM MILITARILY THEREFORE MIGHT HAVE BEEN GENUINE.

4. AT THE SAME TIME, THE MILITARY BUILD-UP AND NOISE HELPED HIM TO STABILIZE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY. FOR MANY SHOWDOWN WITH AMERICANS WAS USED BY HIM TO DIVERT WORLD OPINION FROM WHAT WAS AND STILL IS HAPPENING IN UGANDA.

5. WHAT AMIN'S REAL PLANS WERE WHEN HE CHANGED VENUE TO ENTEBBE AIRPORT WILL PROBABLY NEVER BE KNOWN. I STILL BELIEVE THAT HE DID NOT INTEND TO DO ANY PHYSICAL HARM TO ANY AMERICAN. BUT HIS ANGRY AND INSULTING REMARKS AGAINST AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE WHO INTERVENED ON BEHALF OF AMERICANS SHOW THAT THEY HAVE SPOILED SHOW FOR HIM WHICH HE WAS ANXIOUS TO CELEBRATE. I ASSUME THAT HE WAS PREPARED FOR A VERY HUMILIATING OR EVEN DIRTY AFFAIR AS HE HAS DONE WITH THE BRITISH SEVERAL TIMES. I STILL EXCLUDE ANY PLAN BEYOND THIS LIKE LOCKING UP AMERICANS AT THE OLD AIRPORT IN REVENGE FOR DEFEAT BY ISRAELI AT SAME PLACE LAST YEAR.

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6. POSSIBLE MOTIVES FOR THE FINAL CANCELLATION OF MEETING ARE:

INTERVENTIONS BY MOBUTU, KING KHALID AND OTHERS.

-FEARS HE MIGHT NOT SURVIVE AMERICAN INVASION.

-REALIZATION THAT WITHOUT AMERICAN PILOTS THERE IS NO UGANDAN AIRLINE. STAYING AWAY OF BOEING 707 AND OF HIS CHIEF PILOT MIGHT ALSO HAVE PLAYED A ROLE.

-REALIZATION THAT 25 AMERICANS ARE WORKING FOR UNDP AND THAT SOME OF THEM DECLARED THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH THEIR FELLOW AMERICANS.

-REALIZATION THAT APPROXIMATELY 15 TO 20 PERCENT OF AMERICANS IN UGANDA ARE BLACK AMERICANS.

-REALIZATION THAT WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, WAS
MOHAMMED'S BIRTHDAY AND THAT THE MUSLIM SUPREME COUNCIL
ALREADY HAD INVITED TO 'MAULED' AT
12:30 P.M. TO THE COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS WITH INVITATIONS
ALSO TO DIPLOMATS GONE OUT.

7. WHETHER THE SHOWDOWN WITH AMERICANS HAS COME
TO AN END IS DIFFICULT TO SAY. SINCE THE MEETING
WITH AMERICANS WAS NOT CANCELLED VOLUNTARILY, AMIN
MIGHT REGARD CANCELLATION AS DEFEAT. THIS WOULD
EXPLAIN HIS BITING REMARKS ABOUT MOBUTU AND OTHERS
AND HIS NEW ATTACKS ON AMERICANS, WHEN HE SAW SPECIAL
ENVOY FROM PRESIDENT OF RWANDA ON MARCH 1.

8. ON THE OTHER HAND I BELIEVE THAT AMIN SOON
WILL COME TO HIS SENSES AGAIN AND FORGET THE WHOLE
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AFFAIR. WHETHER HE, AT A LATER DATE, WILL COME BACK
TO THE AMERICANS OR THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE, WILL
HAVE TO BE SEEN. NEW TARGET MAY BE OTHERS, PERHAPS
THE MISSIONARIES IN GENERAL. WITH AMIN ONE NEVER KNOWS.
THE ONLY MEASURE ONE CAN TAKE, IF ONE LIVES HERE, IS
TO REMAIN CALM. ELLERKMANN"

END TEXT.
CASH

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 05-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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